



# **GETTING YOUR ARTICLES PUBLISHED**

or

## **Where in the World Do I Sell It?**

Melanie Rigney

Montrose Christian Writers Conference

July 24, 2008

# The State of Magazines and Newspapers Today

- The number of new magazine launches is slowing.
- Interior decorating and design remains a hot category.
- The number of daily newspapers continues to decline; the number of weekly newspapers is growing slightly.
- Blogs are the big news—writing for others, or writing your own. RSS feeds keep your fans apprised of when there's new content.



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# The State of Newspapers

- The number of daily newspapers in the United States fell from 1,756 in 1975 to 1,452 in 2005, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- Paid newspaper circulation fell from 60.7 million to 53.3 million during that same period.
- The number of weekly (published fewer than four times per week) newspapers on a slight upswing. In 1996, there were 6,580 weeklies with a total circulation of nearly 46 million; in 2005, the number was 6,659 with a circulation of 49.5 million, according to the National Newspaper Association.



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# Blogs

- A blog is a Web site that contains an online personal journal with reflections, comments, and often hyperlinks provided by the writer.
- Technorati tracked 50 million blogs by July 31, 2006, and estimates the blogosphere is doubling every 6.5 months.
- More than 175,000 blogs are created every day.
- Blogs aren't just for teenagers! Thousands if not millions are faith-based (such as <http://yourdailytripod.blogspot.com/>)
- It's easy and free to set up your blog (visit [www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com), for example).

**Your Daily Tripod**

Christ is counting on you. And I am counting on Christ. Your Daily Tripod is a service of Cursillo of the Arlington Diocese, VA ([www.arlingtoncursillo.org](http://www.arlingtoncursillo.org)) to support your "Fourth Day." My prayer is that this will inspire your Fourth Day journey of Piety, Study and Action as much as writing or editing it inspires my journey, the lessons learned in "Just Faith" and how we all live together in relationship with each other and with our loving God.

**Saturday, July 28, 2007**

**Teach Us to Pray**

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July 29, 2007

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

*Should not the judge of all the world act with justice? Genesis 18:25*

*He brought you to life along with him, having forgiven us all our transgressions; obliterating the bond against us, with its legal claims, which was opposed to us, he also removed it from our midst, nailing it to the cross. Colossians 2:14*

*I tell you, if he does not get up to give him the loaves because of their friendship, he will get up to give him whatever he needs because of his persistence. Luke 11:8*

**Piety**

*From Sacred Space (<http://www.sacredspace.ie/>)*



# Blogs

- Keep people notified about when you've got new content on your blog with RSS feeds (Really Simple Syndication). An RSS document contains either a summary of content from an associated Web site or the full text. RSS makes it possible for people to keep up with their favorite sites in an automated manner that's easier than checking them manually.

The screenshot shows the Christian Today website with a navigation menu at the top: ABOUT US, LEADERSHIP, MEDIAPACK, RSS FEEDS, CONTACT US, E-NEWSLETTER, FEEDBACK, TERMS & CONDITIONS, and POST OUR BANNERS. The main content area features the Christian Today logo and a sub-header: "SIMPLY LET YOUR 'YES' BE 'YES', AND YOUR 'NO', 'NO'. (MT 5:37)". Below this, there is a section titled "What is RSS?" which explains that RSS (Really Simple Syndication) is a method of receiving constantly updated links to chosen websites. A list of RSS feeds is provided, each with an "XML" button:

|                         |     |             |     |              |     |
|-------------------------|-----|-------------|-----|--------------|-----|
| All Main Page Headlines | XML | Culture     | XML | Africa       | XML |
| World                   | XML | Comments    | XML | Americas     | XML |
| Church                  | XML | News Briefs | XML | Asia-Pacific | XML |
| Missions                | XML | Life        | XML | Europe       | XML |
| Ministries              | XML | Youth       | XML | Middle East  | XML |
| Society                 | XML |             |     | South Asia   | XML |

Below the list, there is a section titled "How can I receive RSS feeds?" which explains that there are several ways to receive RSS feeds, but the main method is to download a program called a 'News Reader'. It also mentions that there are several News Reader programs available for all platforms, many of which are free. A link to "iTunes" is provided at the bottom.

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# Newsletters

- It's impossible to even estimate how many electronic and paper trade and consumer newsletters are published daily, weekly, or monthly in the United States today, but the number is certainly in the millions.
- Newsletters can cover technical, professional, hobbyist, enthusiast, and other topics.





# What's All This Mean to Me?

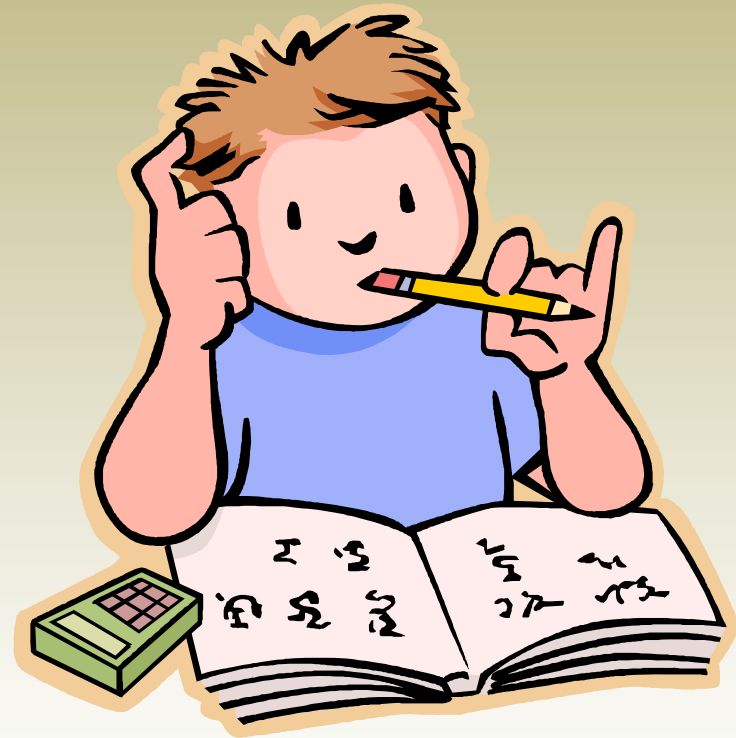
- If you've got a passion, there's a publication that wants your work.
- If you've got expertise, there's a publication that wants your work.
- If you've got an idea, there's a publication that wants your work.





# Finding Markets for Your Work

- Identify your target reader.
- Are you part of that audience? If so, what publications/sites do you turn to for information?
- If not, talk with friends or colleagues who are in your target audience to get this information.







# Check the Guidelines

- Increasingly, you'll find the most up-to-date writers' guidelines at publication Web sites.
- If you can't readily find the guidelines on the home page, search for "guidelines" or try the "About Us" or "Contact Us pages."
- If at all possible, review a few issues of the magazine before querying.

ONLINE HOME OF AMERICA'S #1 INSPIRATIONAL MAGAZINE

TRUE STORIES OF HOPE  
AND INSPIRATION

## Guideposts

July 29, 2007

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### Guideposts Editorial Guidelines

[Photography Guidelines](#)  
[Illustration Guidelines](#)

*Guideposts*® magazine is a monthly inspirational, interfaith, nonprofit publication written by people from all walks of life. Its articles present tested methods for developing courage, strength and positive attitudes through faith in God. Our writers express viewpoints from a variety of Protestant, Catholic and Jewish faith experiences.

A typical *Guideposts* story is a first-person narrative written in simple, dramatic, anecdotal style with a spiritual point that the reader can "take away" and apply to his or her own life. The story may be the writer's own or one written in the first person for someone else. Even our short features, such as "His Mysterious Ways," "What Prayer Can Do," "Angels Among Us" and "Divine Touch" use this format. Writing a short feature is often the easiest way of making a sale to *Guideposts*.

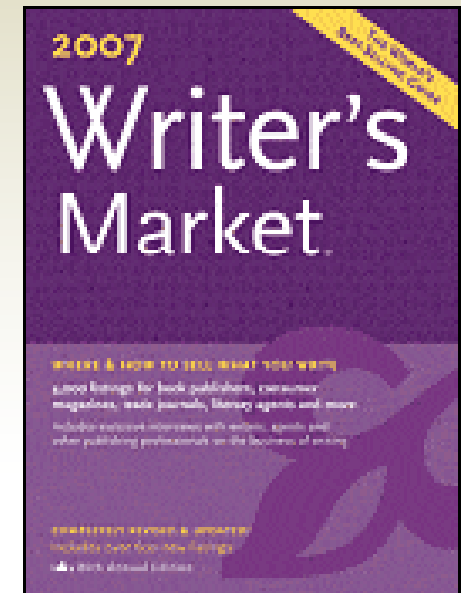
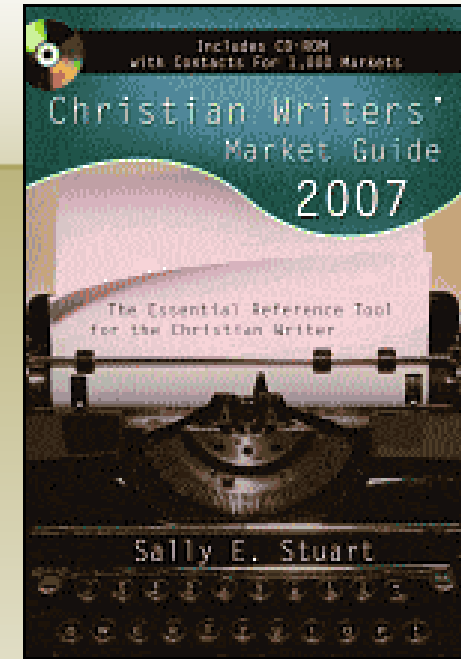
**Please observe the following in writing your *Guideposts* story:**

- Don't try to tell an entire life story in a few pages. Focus on one specific happening in a person's life. The emphasis should be on one individual. Bring in as few people as possible so that the reader's interest stays with the dominant character.
- Decide what your spiritual point, or "takeaway," will be. Everything in the story should be tied in with this specific theme.
- Don't leave unanswered questions. Give enough facts so that the reader will know what happened. Use description and dialogue to let the reader feel as if he were there, seeing the characters, hearing them talk. Dramatize the



# Check the Guidelines

- While publications like *Christian Writers' Market Guide* and *Writer's Market* aren't always as up to date as we might like (not even WritersMarket.com), they can provide leads on publications the target market reads.
- Be sure to consult the latest version; you'll find them at your library or bookstore as well as for sale online.



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# Publications Looking for Writers

- Free newsletters such as [Writersweekly.com](http://Writersweekly.com) and [AbsoluteWrite.com](http://AbsoluteWrite.com) frequently list new publications or markets in need of material.
- Samir Husni's [mrmagazine.com](http://mrmagazine.com) is acknowledged as the leading site to find out about magazine launches.





# Consulting the Guidelines

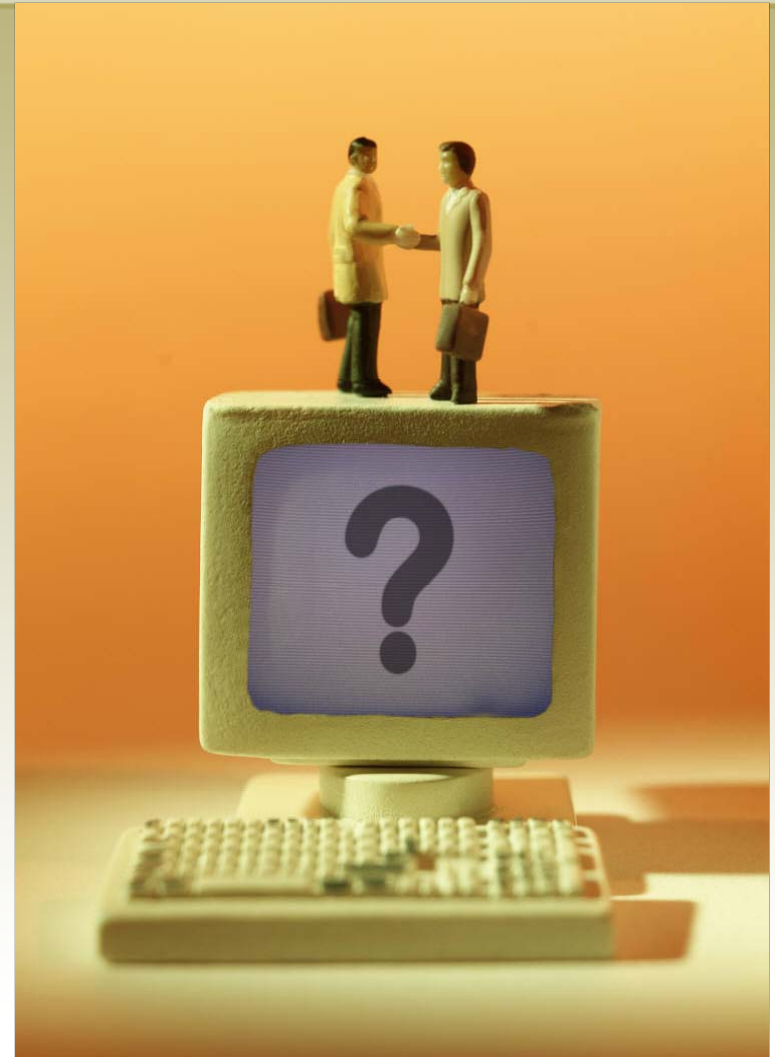
- What does the publication want?
  - Query letters vs. submitting completed articles
  - Word length
  - Ways to break in—upfront sections, fillers, shorts
  - Form—e-queries vs. snail mail or fax
  - Lead time
  - Simultaneous submission policy
  - Rights issues
  - Payment issues





# Query Letters

- Paragraph 1: Bait your hook. Establish a need/problem the magazine's readers have.
- Paragraph 2: Explain how your feature/column addresses it, including sidebars, people to be interviewed, conclusion.
- Paragraph 3: Why you're the one to write it.





# E-Queries

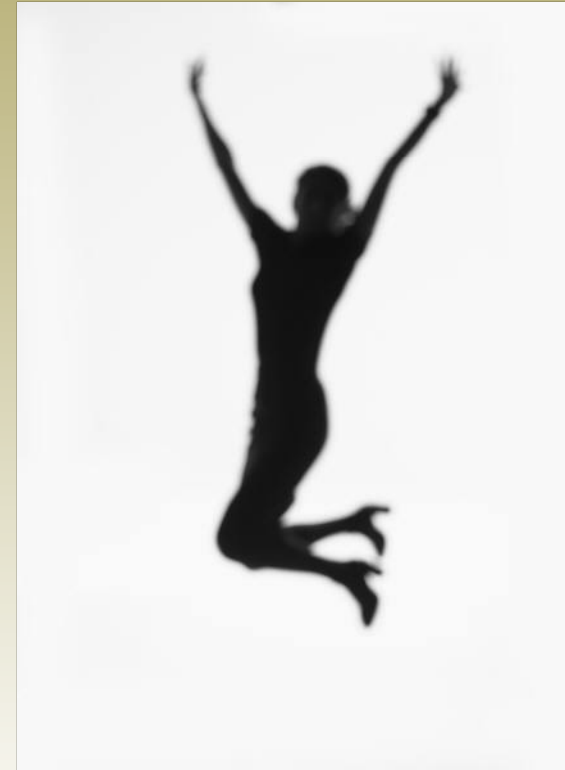
- E-queries follow the same rules as snail mail queries.
  - Read the guidelines
  - Send what the editors want—query in the body of the e-mail or as an attachment
  - If you're asked to send an attachment, make sure it's in the format requested (text, RTF, Word, etc.)
- Your e-query should be as formal (not casual) as a snail mail query. This is a business proposal, not a friendly chat.





# No Query Letter Required

- With essays and op-ed pieces, a cover letter simply saying “Here is my essay/opinion piece, these are my credentials, thank you” frequently is sufficient. Check the guidelines.





# Should You Write for Free?

## Pros

You get a clip.

You can say you've  
been published.

You make contact with  
an editor.

Someone else thinks  
you can write.

## Cons

It doesn't pay the bills.

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# Questions?

Thanks for coming!

Melanie Rigney

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